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CIA Recruiter Offers Jobs, Avoids Policy

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Patricia Schmittle stood behind a table at the University of Cincinnati Wednesday, telling students how they could work for her employer—the Central Intelligence Agency.

She fielded questions from students interested in jobs ranging from intelligence analysts to cartographers to stenographers.

But members of a local group opposed to U.S. intervention in Central America were interested in other answers.

The group, the Central American Task Force, wanted to know what Schmittle thought about the use of CIA funds to assist in the mining of Nicaraguan ports in Central America.

Schmittle appeared on UC's campus as part of Bearcat Trackers Days, in which 50 companies talk to interested students. Her efforts came a day after the U.S. Senate approved a non-binding resolution calling for an end to the use of CIA funds to assist in mining Nicaraguan ports.

SCHMITTLE DECLINED to answer questions from task force members about CIA policy, referring such inquiries to the public affairs office at CIA headquarters in Langley, Va.

Asked by *The Enquirer* how the CIA recruits students and for what positions, Schmittle also declined to answer, saying she was at the recruiting seminar to talk to students. She again referred questions to headquarters.

Melinda Tuhus, a student and member of the task force, repeatedly asked questions about what the CIA does.

"I do believe a representative of the CIA should be able to respond to such questions about what the company does," Tuhus said, "and she wouldn't answer. She said it wasn't her job. She told me she was to answer questions from persons serious in a career with the CIA and she said she could tell from my questions I wasn't a serious candidate."

The members of the task force eventually were told to stop handing out leaflets, which attacked CIA activities, because they had not been given a permit to do so.

SCHMITTLE SAID she couldn't debate CIA policies. She said she was at UC to give students an idea of what they could do in the CIA—jobs ranging from a stenographer to a political analyst.

Della Biron, another student, said the information on the CIA table at the seminar wasn't what she expected.

"It's not the stereotype of the CIA," she said. "My expectations weren't positions like political analysts, librarians or engineers. It kind of changes the TV image of what a CIA agent is. I'm interested in the investigative end of it. Maybe the FBI is where I want to be."

Patty Volz, spokeswoman for CIA in Virginia, said she has not heard of protests against CIA recruits elsewhere.

"RECRUITERS AREN'T out there to answer questions about CIA activities. They are to discuss employment opportunities."

The CIA's recruitment program is ongoing.

"We do need people from all disciplines such as engineers, analysts, foreign linguists, computer programmers and data processors. We're a very diverse agency and therefore we have to be very widespread when it comes to our recruiting program," she said. "We don't hire somebody to be an operative. It's part and parcel of our recruiting program."

The CIA recruits on 300 campuses annually, Volz said, and has contacts with an additional 800.

"Can you apply for an operative position with the CIA or do you become one after so many years?" one student asked.

"You can if you express an interest," Schmittle responded.



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UC STUDENT, left, discusses job opportunities with CIA personnel representative.